

REMARKS

Status Of Application

Claims 1-26 are pending in the application; the status of the claims is as follows:

Claims 1-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Salama et al. (Offshore Technology Conference, May 1999).

Claim 18 is objected to as unclear with regard to the meaning of the phrase "between at least one of said metal liner and at least one of said metal composite interfaces."

Information Disclosure Statement

The indication, in the Office Action that the Examiner has acknowledged receipt of the PTO Forms 1449, is noted with appreciation.

Claim Amendments

Claims 2, 5, 8, and 18 have been amended.

Claim 18 has been amended to explicitly refer to a position implicated in the original claims. This change does not introduce any new matter.

New claims 27-40 have been added.

Objection

Claim 18 was objected to because the phrase meaning of "between at least one of said metal liner and at least one of said metal composite interfaces" was alleged to be unclear. It was questioned how a ring could fit between the liner and interfaces. Applicant respectfully traverses the objection.

As illustrated in Figure 1 and discussed in the application (see paragraph 12 for example) the interfaces 22 and the liner 16 may be directly connected or the interfaces 22 and liner 16 may be connected by transition ring(s) 24. As explained in the application, the use of a transition ring between the liner and the metal composition interface may avoid certain fabrication problems. Claim 18 has been amended to clarify the position is between an end of the liner and one of the interfaces. Thus, claim 18 applies to a device using a single transition ring at one end of the liner, or use of a transition ring at both ends of the liner.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the objection to claim 18 as being unclear how a ring could fit between a liner and interfaces, be reconsidered and withdrawn.

No New Matter

This Amendment is being presented promptly after the discovery of the need therefor. This Amendment does not affect the scope of the claims, does not introduce any new matter, does not present any new issue, does not require any additional search, and will not present an undue burden on the personnel of the Patent and Trademark Office. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the Amendment be entered in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.312.

35 U.S.C. § 102(b) Rejection

The rejection of claims 1-26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by M.M. Salama, "Design Consideration for Composite Drilling Riser", Offshore Technology Conference, May 1999, pgs 1-11 ("Salama"), is respectfully traversed based on the following.

A rejection under § 102(b) requires that each element of the claim be found within the four corners of the reference. With respect to claims 1-26, each of independent claims

1, 10, and 22 claim a reinforcing layer “adjacent to the outside of the liner.” The Salama reference does not disclose a reinforcing layer adjacent to the metal liner. To the extent that the innermost layer of the structural composite overlayer comprising E-glass reinforcing fiber is a reinforcing layer as asserted by the Examiner, that layer is not adjacent to the metal liner. Rather, the innermost layer of the structural composite disclosed in Salama is separated from the metal liner by an “interface” or shear ply of 2.3 mm thick hydrogenated nitrile rubber (“HNBR”). (Salama, page 4, column 2). Of course, claims 2 – 9, 27, 28; 11 – 21; and 23 – 26, which depend on independent claims 1, 10, and 26 respectively, all require the placement of the reinforcing layer adjacent to the metal liner which is not disclosed by the Salama reference.

With respect to claim 2, Salama does not disclose a reinforcing layer or the material of construction of such a reinforcing layer.

With respect to claim 7-8, Salama also does not disclose engaging surfaces as the term is used in the specification in paragraph 19.

With respect to claims 19-21, Applicant has carefully studied Figure 3 of the Salama reference, and respectfully traverses the assertion that it illustrates a generally Y shaped portion that is received in grooves of the metal composite interface. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests clarification and specific identification of the alleged Y shaped portion.

Nothing in the Salama reference discloses a reinforcing layer adjacent to the metal liner as discussed in the present application (see paragraph 17 for example).

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 1-26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by M.M. Salama, “Design Consideration for Composite Drilling Riser”, Offshore Technology Conference, May 1999, pgs 1-11 (“Salama”), be reconsidered and withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Wherefore, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application is considered to be in condition for allowance, and an early reconsideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

This Amendment does not increase the number of independent claims and increases the total number of claims by 14 from 26 to 40, but does not present any multiple dependency claims. Accordingly, a Response Transmittal and Fee Authorization form authorizing the amount of \$700.00 to be charged to Hitchcock Evert LLP's Credit Card (a credit card payment form is enclosed). However, if the Response Transmittal and Fee Authorization form is missing, insufficient, or otherwise inadequate, or if a fee, other than the issue fee, is required during the pendency of this application, please charge such fee to Hitchcock Evert LLP's Deposit Account No. 503374.

Any fee required by this document other than the issue fee, and not submitted herewith should be charged to Hitchcock Evert LLP's Deposit Account No. 503374. Any refund should be credited to the same account.

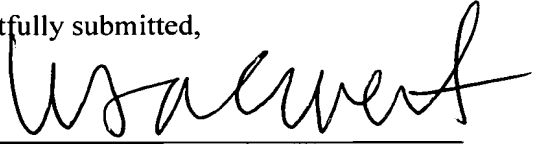
If an extension of time is required to enable this document to be timely filed and there is no separate Petition for Extension of Time filed herewith, this document is to be construed as also constituting a Petition for Extension of Time Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) for a period of time sufficient to enable this document to be timely filed.

Any other fee required for such Petition for Extension of Time and any other fee required by this document pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17, other than the issue fee, and not submitted herewith should be charged to Hitchcock Evert LLP's Deposit Account No. 503374. Any refund should be credited to the same account.

Application No. 10/675,118
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Respectfully submitted,

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